

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 7, 2019

Hon. Nita M. Lowey
Chairwoman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, the Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Richard C. Shelby
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128, the Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Hon. Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-146A, the Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Chairman Shelby, Ranking Member Granger, and Vice Chairman Leahy:

When the House of Representatives and the Senate meet to reconcile the differences between their versions of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2020, we respectfully ask you to provide robust funding for NOAA-sponsored research on Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs). We further ask that, within the amount appropriated for this purpose, you provide specific funding for NOAA to sponsor an updated study on the economic impacts of HABs nationally and in those states and territories most affected by HABs.

The House version of the bill (H.R. 3055), as approved by the Appropriations Committee, provided about \$3.9 billion for NOAA Operations, Research, and Facilities (ORF). Within that amount, \$104.5 million was provided for Coastal Science and Assessment, including \$20 million for Competitive External Research. According to the accompanying committee report, of that \$20 million, at least \$10 million is for HABs research. As requested by Congresswoman Murphy, the committee report specifies that at least \$1.75 million is for an updated study on the economic impacts of HABs on both the national and state level.

During floor consideration of H.R. 3055, we and five of our colleagues offered a bipartisan amendment to increase NOAA ORF by \$2 million, with the additional funding intended for Competitive External Research and specifically for HABs research. The amendment was adopted. See Amendment #5 offered to H.R. 3055 (Reps. Murphy, Mast, Soto, Kaptur, Posey, Bonamici, and Crist).

The Senate-approved version of the bill (Senate Substitute to H.R. 3055) would provide about \$3.7 billion for NOAA ORF, \$96 million for Coastal Science and Assessment, and \$18 million for

Competitive External Research. The committee report accompanying the CJS bill specifies that, of the funding provided for Coastal Science and Assessment, up to \$5 million shall be used “to accelerate deployment of effective methods of intervention and mitigation to reduce the frequency, severity, and impact of harmful algal bloom events in freshwater systems.”

We appreciate that both the House and Senate versions of the bill recognize the importance of efforts to mitigate HABs, which can adversely affect human health, drinking water, fisheries, and the broader economy. We ask that the final bill provide the highest level of funding feasible for HABs research—including funding for an updated economic impacts study—along the lines of the House-passed bill as amended.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress



Brian J. Mast
Member of Congress

cc: Hon. José E. Serrano, Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Hon. Jerry Moran, Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Hon. Robert B. Aderholt, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Hon. Jeanne Shaheen, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies